

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

22 MARCH 1985

Lebanon

IDF Operations — Twenty-one "terrorists" were killed and 40 suspects were arrested when IDF troops raided 3 villages in southern Lebanon early on 21 March, according to Jerusalem radio. Reacting to an incident in which two Lebanese members of a CBS television crew were killed, an IDF spokesman noted that Israeli troops do not fire on civilians, but that journalists in areas where armed "terrorists" are encountered run the risk of getting hurt, Jerusalem television reported. The IDF withdrew from the Lebanese villages later in the evening leaving behind "horrible destruction," Beirut radio related.

Israeli Withdrawal — All IDF soldiers will be out of Lebanon and deployed along the international border by mid-May at the latest since Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres has guaranteed the necessary Cabinet majority to implement the last stage of the withdrawal, the Tel Aviv paper *HA'ARETZ* disclosed. The area evacuated by the IDF will see a different deployment of the army of southern Lebanon based on a new "civilian guard" tactic, the paper noted.

Sidon Clashes — The Lebanese Forces' Executive Committee, in a statement broadcast by the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon, acknowledged that responsibility for security in Sidon belongs to the Lebanese Army and noted that the Lebanese Forces have withdrawn from the Sidon area.

Beirut Kidnapping — A French Embassy spokesman confirmed that the French vice consul was kidnapped in West Beirut on 22 March, AFP reported.

Iran-Iraq War

An Iraqi military communique, carried by INA, stated that units of Iraq's III Army Corps launched two attacks on Iranian positions on 19 and 21 March "destroying" Iranian forces and resolving the situation in favor of the Iraqi forces "in their new positions." Iranian losses during the two attacks amounted to 425 killed and a large number of wounded, according to Voice of the Masses radio. Meanwhile, an Iranian military communique cited by Tehran radio announced that an Iraqi MIG aircraft was shot down by an Iranian plane in the western region of Iran on 21 March. The radio also denied an INA report that an Iraqi plane shot down an Iranian F-4 plane near Hamadan the same day. In a related development 11 Iraqi planes bombed 25 points in Ilam on 21 March killing 12 people, IRNA confirmed.

Iran-Iraq War Diplomacy

Following a meeting with Iraq's President Saddam Husayn, India's minister of state for external relations contended that Iraq responded "positively" to India's initiative to deescalate the Gulf war, Delhi radio reported. President Husayn told the Indian envoy that he will send a reply to India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi "containing practical and constructive proposals" to facilitate India's mission, according to INA.

Jordanian Airlines' Offices Attacked

The Royal Jordanian Airlines' offices in Athens, Rome, and Nicosia were subjected to terrorist attacks the morning of 21 March, Amman radio reported. In a phone call to AFP, the Palestinian Black September group claimed responsibility for the attacks and maintained that the group's operations "inside and outside" Jordan will continue until the Jordanian Government is "beaten," AFP related.

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Babrak Karmal Addresses Nation on New Year

*LD211918 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Speech by Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the Revolutionary Council, on the occasion of the new year — date and place not given; live or recorded]

[Excerpts] Dear compatriots, sisters and brothers. Once again we are about to welcome the first day of the new year, on the threshold of a new year and a new spring.

On behalf of the PDPA Central Committee, the DRA state and government, and on my own behalf, I congratulate from the bottom of my heart all toiling and freedom-loving people of the homeland, the persecuted and fighting Pashtun and Baluchi brothers wherever they are, the other nations and peoples of the world, the toiling Muslims of the world, and the brother toilers of Iran and Pakistan, and wish them success in the struggle for freedom, genuine independence, national peace and security, progress and social justice, and friendship and fraternity.

In 1363, the year which is ending, we achieved relatively new victories. Crushing blows were inflicted on the murdering counterrevolutionaries, and the country's defense capability was further strengthened.

The implementation of the country's socioeconomic plans during 1363, despite difficulties stemming from the destruction wrought by the counterrevolutionaries and economic bandits imposed by our class enemies, imperialism, and reaction against our country, is evidence of the specific economic progress of our national economy.

Gross domestic production and the country's national income show an increase of 4.7 percent and 5 percent respectively compared with 1357 [1978-79]. There has also been a noticeable growth compared with the previous year. This growth is linked with the increase of 11.8 billion afghanis or 7 percent in the gross national income of utilized output, and 10.4 billion afghanis or 8.7 percent in the national utilized income.

In the country's socioeconomic plan for the new year of 1364 specific growth has been envisaged in various economic, social, and cultural fields.

With optimism we declare that the new year, 1364, will be a year of domestic peace, a year enabling our toiling people to attain peace and security and the gains of the revolution, the year of coming closer to prosperity, the year for serious defeat of the inhumane strivings of the enemies of the homeland, the enemies of the people, and the enemies of our revolution; and the year for the victory of peaceful thoughts as well as peace and security for humanity.

The people's security and prosperity is linked with the decisive defeat of the armed counterrevolutionaries and ending the undeclared war of imperialism and reaction.

International imperialism, headed by U.S. imperialism and reaction with the active participation of Chinese hegemonism, using the antipeople and inhuman military regime of Pakistan — dependent on the United States — and the reactionary circles of Iran, gives a fresh dimension and extension each day to the undeclared war, plundering, murdering and blatant armed aggression against revolutionary Afghanistan.

The terrorist government policy of the U.S. Administration toward the DRA has been openly put into action. As admitted by the Western press, including the media of the United States itself, after the Vietnam war Afghanistan become the major target of conspiracy operations and devilish plans of the intelligence services of U.S. imperialism, in particular the CIA. The Reagan administration has allocated hundreds of millions of dollars for training counterrevolutionary bands and arming them with new weapons including heavy weapons, for the mass killing of Afghan human beings.

In Pakistan, China, and Iran counterrevolutionary bands are being trained and they enter Afghanistan armed with lethal U.S. and Chinese weapons for killing, plundering, subversion, and terrorism. Imperialism and reactionary circles have launched hysteric anti-Afghan propaganda to deceive our simple Afghan people and to deceive the world's public. The bandits whose hands are stained with the blood of their compatriots are being welcomed in Washington and they receive money from the Reagan administration and the CIA for their crimes against their compatriots, to massacre our people, and to enrich themselves.

Because of this, in Kabul city and in the provinces hundreds of thousands of our toiling compatriots are today raising their voices against the shameless intervention of U.S. imperialism and the adventurist administration of Reagan. The participation of hundreds of thousands of our compatriots in today's march demonstrates their unreserved support for the actions of the party and the government and their formidable hatred and repulsion of U.S. imperialism, Beijing's hegemonism, and their criminal allies who, by arming and exporting the counterrevolutionary bands, want to endanger the gains of the revolution.

However, the conspiracies and aggression of imperialism and reaction, stemming from the military regime of U.S.-backed Pakistan against the DRA, despite causing temporary difficulties, are doomed to decisive defeat; and no imperialist or reactionary force in the world can stop the toiling and freedom-loving people of Afghanistan on the revolutionary path they have chosen. With all our energy and all our possibilities we defend to the end our Afghan land, every inch of our sacred land, the honor and pride of the homeland, the homeland of Afghans and Afghanistan, our revolution and revolutionary authority, justice and progress, against the conspiracies and aggression of imperialism and reaction.

We will fight without hesitation to restore the peace and security of the country and for the prosperity and tranquillity of the people of the homeland.

The fighters of the path of our revolution have created epics and they fight every day with further readiness for battle and sacrifice to defend the land and the honor of the homeland, to defend

the victorious April Revolution and the revolutionary gains of their people. Our valiant warriors are also being sacrificed on this sacred path and leave behind them examples of their glorious heroism. May their souls be happy and their name eternal.

Friends and dear compatriots: With the arrival of the new year we have major tasks before us. One is our Nowrozi, historic, and national duty — that is to say, the continuation and intensification of struggle to decisively crush the armed counterrevolutionaries and to restore the conditions for the peaceful work and life of our people; and the other is our Nowrozi, international, and humane duty — that is to say, again, the defense of international peace and security, freedom and progress, and the prosperity and tranquillity of the working people of the world — this common home of all humanity.

The aggressive imperialist and militarist forces, headed by the Reagan administration, are following their warmongering policy to gain military superiority and to disrupt the military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union, between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

The militarist circles of U.S. imperialism are creating and fanning tension in various corners of the world and impose a policy of exporting counterrevolutionaries; the undeclared imperialist war against the DRA is part of this policy.

On one hand the DRA is decisively struggling to foil the conspiracies of imperialist aggression in its undeclared war and regard it as an unbreakable part of the struggle against the warmongering policy of imperialism and struggle for peace and security in our region and in the world. On the other hand, the DRA regards it as its immediate humane duty to struggle for safeguarding international peace; and once again, at the present time, declares it as its Nowrozi, international, and humane duty.

Friends and esteemed compatriots: The necessities of life demand that we focus all our efforts and strivings, together with the advancement of struggle against political and economic banditry, on the growth of the country's economy, improving the living standards of the people and restoration of security in our Afghan society.

We can say with confidence that Afghanistan, without deviation and for always, is following the path of genuine revolutionary transformations.

Formidable and various duties are laid before our party, the revolutionary government, and our people. This year the great and important historic task of elections for jirgas, that is to say, the local organs of government power and administration in various provinces, must be begun. With the completion of the local elections a formidable and practical step will have been taken to build the firm pillars and foundations of the new democratic society; and the ground will be prepared for the direct participation of the people in the affairs of the government administration.

We have decided to take other major and historic steps this year on the basis of the independent and traditional characteristics of our people. By means of these steps the high organs of our

independent government authority will be consolidated from the foundations; and the completion of elections for the local organs of government power and administration will advance our Afghan society toward the realization of genuine democracy. Defense of the homeland and revolution was and will be the duty of each individual of the homeland. However, completion of this formidable task is linked with major sociopolitical work among the people to raise the level of social awareness of the masses. This by itself will bring about an increase of work and social activities of the people and will raise the level of their sociopolitical awareness, and will realize the genuine democracy and genuine authority of the people.

As we have seen, the execution of major tasks in the coming year lie before us. The masses must be prepared and organized for creative and self-sacrificing work and struggle. The range of initiatives must be broadened, and revolutionary work and activities, justice and piety, must be strengthened; party, government, and work discipline must be consolidated.

The spirit of patriotism and revolutionary enthusiasm must be further strengthened among the people in order to attract them to the creative work of the new society and their participation in democratic activities.

I say this explicitly because the execution of these duties, that is to say, giving the people political awareness, expanding their initiatives and consolidation of their energy for the good and prosperity of all and the humanitarian objectives of our revolutionary society, most of all is the duty of the members and organizations of the PDPA.

Party members must be examples of virtuous earnest service for the people and they should work in accordance with patriotic conscience for the tranquillity of Afghan workers. They should sincerely and earnestly strive to deepen fraternal unity between themselves, the party, and people; and they must not only be examples in society for the observance of order and democratic legality in the society, but should work effectively and continuously for the consolidation of its pillars in society and its supervision.

All those who discharge their national duties with a pure revolutionary conscience are genuine patriots and we appreciate their work.

Friends and compatriots: Let us join together for the decisive defeat of the armed counterrevolutionaries, and work and struggle to provide the conditions and favorable atmosphere for the creative work and peaceful life of our people, for the prosperity and tranquillity of our people, and for the construction of a new democratic society which is the common wish and desire of all working people of the country.

In conclusion, I would like to renew my sincere wishes for the prosperity and tranquillity of the people and our beloved children — the future sons of the country — and for the new year, the year of red roses of spring and full of prosperity.

With hearts full of love for our persecuted and freedom-loving people we welcome the new year, the new spring, and the bright

Nowroze of the new year for [words indistinct] in the Afghan homeland.

Congratulations on new year; may it be prosperous. Greetings to our traditional Nowrozi Festival.

Karmal, Others Address PDPA CC Plenum

*LD220524 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT
20 Mar 85*

[Text] The PDPA Central Committee's 15th Plenum on intensifying party work among the masses and enhancing the level of their activities in the defense of the homeland and revolution was held yesterday afternoon in Delkosh Hall, the headquarters of the Revolutionary Council.

Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, read the basic statement of the plenum, comprising the main phases of the work on consolidating the links between the party and people and consolidating the revolutionary authority in localities, which were welcomed warmly by those attending the plenum.

Yasin Sadiqi, secretary of the PDPA Central Committee; Abdul Majid Sarboland, member of the PDPA Central Committee and vice chairman of the DRA Council of Ministers; Sayyed Muhammad Gulabzy, member of the party Central Committee and minister of internal affairs; Sulayman La'eq, member of the party's Central Committee and minister of nationalities and tribal affairs; Abdul Ghaffar Lakanwal, member of the party's Central Committee and minister of agriculture and land reform; Farid Mazdek, candidate member of the party Central Committee and first secretary of the DYOA; Muhammad Faruq, candidate member of the party's Central Committee and general commander of border forces; and Muhammad Anwar Eysar, secretary of the provincial party committee, Nangarhar Province, then expressed their views about the basic statement.

The resolution of the PDPA Central Committee's 15th plenum was then approved unanimously.

The plenum also fully approved the proceedings of Babrak Karmal's visit to the Soviet Union and the result of his meeting with M.S. Gorbachev.

The plenum ended in an atmosphere of unity and revolutionary solidarity after the concluding speech of Babrak Karmal. The official in charge of the departments of the PDPA Central Committee and some deputy heads of a number of departments of the Central Committee, heads of zones, secretaries of provincial party committees, governors, and a number of party activists and government and social organizations were invited to take part in the plenum's work.

Minister on Agricultural Successes, Plans

LD220634 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0433 GMT 22 Mar 85

[Text] Kabul, March 21, BAKHTAR — Abdul Ghaffar Lakanwal, minister of agriculture and land reform, in an auspicious

meeting held on the celebration of new year day said that the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reform of the DRA and its branches were able to supply sufficient foodstuffs and raw materials for the industries in the past Afghan year ended March 20, 1985.

He added that the Ministry has distributed for the peasants and its agricultural cooperatives over 126 thousand chemical fertilizers, pesticides and insecticides, 14 thousand tons of improved wheat seeds, over 5,000 tons of improved cotton seeds and over 27 tons of sowing seeds of sugarbeet.

The minister said that considerable facilities are provided to boost agricultural products in the spring campaign of the new Afghan year beginning today. Over 20 thousand hectares of land will be brought under cultivation, over 600 thousand tons of chemical fertilizers and eleven thousand tons of improved seeds of wheat, cotton and sugarbeet will be distributed to the peasants all over the country. The peasants will also receive insecticides and pesticides at a value of 45 million afghanis and over 143 million afghanis as loans (50 afghanis equal one us dollar).

Trade Union Council Plenum Held in Kabul

*LD220548 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Excerpts] The 11th Plenum of the Central Council of the DRA Trade Unions on duties of trade union organizations to organize toilers in the struggle against the counterrevolutionaries and implementation of the decisions of 15th plenum of the PDPA Central Committee, was held yesterday in the headquarters of the Trade Unions Central Council.

The work of the plenum began by reading the basic report by Satar Pordeli, chairman of the Central Council of the DRA Trade Unions.

The basic report says in part:

The decisive and all-round struggle against the counterrevolutionaries and against the conspiracies of imperialism, must be continued broadly; we should extend our all-round assistance to the country's armed forces as a national force and guardian of the interests of the revolution so that the armed forces become powerful and strong qualitatively and quantitatively. No trade union organization has the right to remain indifferent about this historic mission.

In the next 2 years such a level of training and ideological movement must be organized among the toilers so that each worker feels himself part of this struggle. We must assist the masses so that they can perceive the objectives of the revolution and consciously take part in the construction of the new society. We must also pay profound attention to the growth of the national economy as an important front in the struggle against the counterrevolutionaries; for without a developed economy, one cannot struggle against an enemy who receives millions of dollars and rupees from the capitalists to destroy installations and to paralyze the economy of our country.

We must organize work competition better as a factor for training and improving the economy.

Brigadier General Yasin Sadiqi, secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and general head of the army's political affairs, assessed the plenum's work and specified the duties of trade union organizations to organize and mobilize the toilers of collectives further for the implementation of the lofty objectives of the party and revolution in light of the resolutions and decisions of the PDPA Central Committee, its Politburo, and Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA Central Committee and president of the DRA Revolutionary Council, that every effective work and endeavor will be carried out to realize the resolutions and decisions of the PDPA Central Committee's 15th Plenum.

The BAKHTAR correspondent adds that the draft of the resolution was then read out by Hassan Sepahi, vice chairman of

the Central Council of the DRA Trade Unions, which was then unanimously approved.

In the second part of the plenum's work, Hayatollah Karim, secretary of the Central Council of Trade Unions, presented a report on the implementation of the trade unions' financial plans for this year and the budget for next year.

The draft resolution of the trade unions' budget was read by the secretary of the Central Council of Trade Unions and was then unanimously approved.

In the second part of the plenum's work, organizational issues were discussed and a number of the Presidium and Central Council members had to leave due to their engagements outside trade union affairs, and a number were accepted as new members of the Presidium and Central Council.

Reportage on 21 March Referendum Results

Ershad Casts Vote

*BK211025 Dhaka Overseas Service in Bengali 0904 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Excerpts] President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad cast his vote at 1000 [0400 GMT] at the Adamji Cantonment college center. He was accompanied by Mrs Raushan Ershad. We were present there as the representatives of Radio Bangladesh.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] How do you feel after taking part in the referendum today as the head of state?

[Ershad] I am very happy to see such enthusiasm in the people. I am really pleased to see that the people got a chance to exercise their democratic rights.

[Reporter] What do you have to say at this moment to start anew the democratic process as the next step after referendum?

[Ershad] Now all the responsibilities lie with the opposition political parties. My doors are always open. I will surely try again through dialogue with them to start afresh the process of democracy. [end recording]

The polling was peaceful everywhere. The number of people at the polling centers is increasing as the day goes on. No untoward incident has been reported from any place.

Initial Results 'Overwhelming Yes'

*BK211441 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1403 GMT
21 Mar 85*

["Special bulletin" on referendum]

[Text] Results so far received from different parts of the country show overwhelming yes votes in the country-wide referendum today. According to the Election Commission, of the total of 6,844 polling centers of Dhaka division, results of 246 centers have so far been received. These show 356,222 were yes and 16,325 were no votes; 385 votes have been canceled. In Khulna division, results of 95 polling centers out of the total 4,625 centers have so far been received. In these centers 112,587 votes were cast in the affirmative while 6,534 were in the negative; 197 votes were canceled.

In Rajshahi division, results of 219 out of 5,612 centers are now available — 272,939 were yes votes, while 11,946 were no votes. In Chittagong division, results of 108 centers have so far been received showing 200,435 votes in the affirmative, while 7,281 in the negative.

Here are the districtwise results received so far in our general news room from the Election Commission control room: In Comilla division, out of the total 791 polling centers, results of 103 have been received. In these centers 17,949 were yes and 7,232 were no votes with 690 votes canceled. In Narayanganj district, out of the total 338 polling centers, results of 34 have

been declared showing 63,361 yes votes and 6,532 no votes; 488 votes have been declared canceled. In Madaripur district, out of the total of 333 polling centers, results of 45 have so far been received. These show 56,486 votes in the affirmative, while 1,391 in the negative with 258 votes canceled.

'Massive' Votes for Ershad

*BK211742 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1705 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Excerpt] As preliminary results of the referendum started pouring in, massive yes votes reported to have been cast by the people in favor of President Ershad's policies and programs. Latest unofficial results received so far from 5,511 polling centers out of nearly 23,000 show 8,798,608 yes votes while 394,532 no votes.

Unofficial divisionwise results received earlier from the Election Commission are: In Dhaka division, out of total 6,844 polling centers results of 762 have been received. They show 1,120,221 votes in the affirmative, while 52,186 votes in the negative.

In the Chittagong division, out of the 5,879 polling centers, results of 365 centers have so far been declared. They show 590,315 yes votes and 21,852 no votes. In Rajshahi division, results of 369 polling centers out of 5,612 have landed. Of the total votes cast at these centers 561,861 votes show in the affirmative and 23,056 were in the negative.

In Khulna division, results of 187 polling centers out of 4,625 have been received. Of the total votes cast in these centers 265,327 votes were in the affirmative and 15,147 votes were in the negative.

Ershad Receives 94 Percent

*BK220451 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Excerpt] Results received so far indicate that President Ershad is heading for a massive mandate for his continuing as president. According to reports received from the Election Commission, the percentage of the affirmative votes in the countrywide referendum has exceeded 94 percent of the total votes cast at different polling centers. Of the total of 23,960 polling centers, results of 19,733 have so far been received. These show 27,872,804 yes votes and 1,594,265 negative. A total of 90,829 votes have been declared canceled.

Ershad Securing 'Massive Mandate'

*BK220954 Dhaka Overseas Service in Bengali 0900 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Text] The final results from 58 districts received so far indicate that President Ershad is heading toward securing a massive mandate of the people to continue his policies and programs and to remain as president. Election Commission sources say that out of 47,910,974 votes, 34,655,831 were affirmative and 2,006,301 negative. [figures as heard]

AFP: Ershad Wins 97 Percent*HK211546 Hong Kong AFP in English 1544 GMT 21 Mar 85*

[Text] Dhaka, March 21 (AFP) — Bangladesh military ruler Hussain Mohammed Ershad won 97 per cent of the votes so far counted in today's referendum on support for his rule, the Election Commission said.

The commission said that 468,809 of the some 500,000 ballots counted so far were favourable to the army rule begun when he seized power a year ago.

Opposition figures dismissed the referendum as a farce and said only between two and five per cent of those eligible had voted.

There were 22,859 "no" votes and the rest were rejected for various reasons, the commission said.

Counting will continue overnight and the final result will be known early tomorrow.

The referendum, which Bangladesh's top opposition parties boycotted, was called by the president on March 1st after he announced an indefinite postponement of a general election slated for April 6th.

Poll violence took the life of a militiaman, maimed a child and left several people injured in bomb explosions and stray attacks, officials said.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's top opposition group, the 15-party Alliance, said the public had responded to a strike call it launched for today.

An Alliance statement said Bangladeshis had ignored "all kinds of government intimidations and oppressive measures." Most of its leaders are in hiding to escape detention following a crackdown ordered by President Ershad at the beginning of the month.

The Alliance reiterated its demands for a complete end to martial law and the holding of parliamentary elections under a "neutral and caretaker government."

It announced it would boycott the planned April poll before it was called off, saying it would not take part unless its demands were met first. President Ershad said he called it off because of the boycott by the Alliance and other opposition groups.

BBC: 'Dispute' on Voter Turnout*BK211413 London BBC World Service in English 1200 GMT 21 Mar 85*

[Text] In Bangladesh, voting has ended in the referendum in which the country's military ruler, General Ershad, has been seeking endorsement of his policies. Referendum was held under strict martial law with all activities by the opposition parties banned and the two main opposition leaders under house arrest. (John Rainer) says the turnout appears to have been low.

[Begin recording] Final results of the referendum are not expected to be known until tomorrow. But there seems no reason to doubt that General Ershad has obtained the mandate to remain as president until general elections can be held. The figures for the turnout, however, are likely to become a matter for dispute. The official news agency has been reporting large numbers of people voting, and the presiding officers at a number of polling stations visited by journalists in and around Dhaka were claiming turnout of up to 50 percent several hours before the polls closed, in some cases implying a voting rate of more than one person per minute in each polling booth.

Eyewitnesses, however, claimed that only a trickle of voters had appeared, and many of the polling stations visited by journalists in Dhaka and in several other cities were virtually empty. Some reports from the rural areas suggested that turnout may have been higher there.

But in two polling stations outside Dhaka that I visited queues of alleged voters were hurriedly formed by officials of the government backed Janadal Party as soon as they saw a car with foreign journalists approaching. One man said that he was paid 10 taka, about 30 pence, to pose as a voter. The queues disintegrated again as we left. Other genuine voters said they had arrived at the polling stations only to find their votes had already been cast, and presiding officers admitted that they could do little to check the identity of people voting. [end recording]

Delhi: 'Very Few Voters'*BK211414 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 21 Mar 85*

[Text] In Bangladesh, voting ended this evening in a referendum called by President Ershad to continue for another term. Our Dhaka correspondent who went round the city reports that very few voters turned up at the polling booth to cast their votes. Some booths were completely deserted. There is no report of any untoward incident from anywhere. Bangladesh radio has described the polling as heavy and peaceful.

According to an agency report, two people, including a policeman, were killed when a bomb was hurled from a passing car at a polling booth in Dhaka. Cycle rickshas, private vehicles besides government buses are plying normally in Dhaka despite the call by the opposition alliances to observe a 12-hour hartal [strike] today. The results of the referendum are expected tomorrow night. Opposition leaders say that the referendum was a ploy for legalization of martial law and had called for its boycott.

AFP: Turnout Said '72 Percent'*HK220358 Hong Kong AFP in English 0339 GMT 22 Mar 85*

[Text] Dhaka, March 22 (AFP) — Bangladesh President Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammed Ershad has secured more than 94 percent of votes counted so far in the referendum on his military government's policies, the Election Commission said here today.

It said that 27.9 million of the 29.5 million ballots counted so far were yes votes and that about 1.55 million people had voted against the government's policies.

Voter turnout was 72 percent, the commission said.

This was about 12 percent higher than Gen. Ershad had predicted.

Counting has been completed in 19,733 of the country's 22,984 polling centres and the final results of the referendum were expected later today, the commission added.

Meanwhile, Dhaka newspapers ran banner headlines on Gen. Ershad's success.

"Ershad Heading for Landslide Mandate", said *THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER*. The government-owned Bengali daily *DAINIK BANGLA* said the poll had shown massive support for the president.

Gen. Ershad called the referendum to get the voters' verdict on his three years of military rule after the failure of talks with opposition parties about a general elections.

The general came to power in a bloodless coup on March 24, 1982.

Soviet Diplomat Shot, Dies; Spokesman Remarks

*BK211248 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Text] In the Rajya Sabha today, Mr L.K. Advani demanded a government statement on the killing of the Soviet diplomat in New Delhi. He also demanded a separate statement on the reported disappearance of another Soviet diplomat.

As already reported, a Soviet diplomat was shot dead by some unidentified persons in New Delhi around midday today. The diplomat was driving in his car with his family in the capital's diplomatic area when the assailants shot at him and escaped in a motorcycle. He was rushed to hospital where he was declared dead.

An official spokesman said that the Government of India strongly condemns the shocking crime against a representative of a country with which India has the friendliest of relations. Expressing the government's deep sympathy and condolences to the bereaved family and the Soviet Embassy, he said every effort is being made to trace those responsible for the crime. The police commissioner, Mr S.S. Jog, said the diplomat was Mr Viktor Khitrchenko, a senior engineer in the economic section of the Soviet Embassy.

Priority to Security of Soviets

*BK211358 Delhi General Overseas Service in English
1330 GMT 21 Mar 85*

[Excerpts] A Soviet diplomat was shot dead by some unidentified persons in New Delhi around midday today. The diplomat was driving in his car with his family in the capital's diplomatic area when the assailants shot at him and escaped on a motorcycle.

The police authorities are giving the highest priority and importance to ensuring the security of the Soviet personnel in the country. The police commissioner said the diplomat was Mr Viktor Khitrchenko, a senior engineer in the economic section of the Soviet Embassy. He said the driver of the car has been questioned about the appearance of the assailants and the description flashed to all exit points.

House Discusses Murder

*BK220936 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Text] The home minister told the Lok Sabha today that police investigations are in progress in the murder of the Soviet official, Mr Viktor Khitrchenko, who was shot dead by two unidentified youths riding on a motorcycle in New Delhi yesterday. In a statement, Mr S.B. Chavan assured the house that all efforts are being made to apprehend the culprits. He regretted that such an incident should have taken place at all. The minister told the house that policing in the embassy area has been reinforced and security strengthened. Mr Chavan said that the motorcycle used by the two unidentified assailants did not have any registration number.

The killing of the Soviet diplomat came up in the Rajya Sabha soon after zero hour [recess of house business]. Describing the incident as a shocking one, the CPI member, Mr Kalyanasundaram, said the incident is intended to spoil India's relations with the Soviet Union. He demanded a statement from the government. The deputy chairman said several other members have also demanded a statement. The leader of the house will convey the feelings of the members to the concerned minister.

The Soviet Embassy in New Delhi is making arrangements to fly the body of Mr Viktor Khitrchenko, who was killed by two unknown assailants yesterday. An Embassy official told UNI that the body will be flown to Moscow tomorrow evening.

Gandhi Comments on Hijack Trial in Pakistan

*BK210905 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Text] The prime minister said in the Rajya Sabha today that Pakistan's seriousness about trying the hijackers of the Indian Airlines plane would be clear only at the end of the case. Intervening during question time in the Rajya Sabha today, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said during his recent meeting with President Ziaul Haq in Moscow he had also discussed the hijackers' trial.

Parthasarathy Fets Thai Foreign Minister

*BK220547 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Text] India has reaffirmed its commitment to peaceful solution to problems and deescalation of tension in Southeast Asia. Speaking at a banquet hosted in honor of the visiting Thai foreign minister, Air Chief Marshal Siithi Sawetsila, in New Delhi, the chairman of the policy planning committee of the External Affairs Ministry, Mr G. Parthasarathy, called for a dialogue among the countries of the region to establish a durable peace. In his reply, the Thai foreign minister said withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea can lead to lasting peace in the region.

Chavan Visits Ahmadabad; Army Patrolling Areas

*BK201619 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT
20 Mar 85*

[Text] The union home minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, has expressed the hope that the situation in Ahmadabad City will soon return to normal. The home minister arrived in Ahmadabad to study the situation. Talking to newsmen after going round the disturbed areas of the city, Mr Chavan said that the state government has acted very promptly in dealing with the situation.

When asked about holding of an inquiry into the disturbances, Mr Chavan said that it is a matter to be decided by the state government.

The home minister said that he has received reports from the state government regarding damages during the disturbances. He also had detailed discussions with the state chief minister,

home minister, and other high officials. He said that he will give a detailed report to the Lok Sabha tomorrow.

Mr Chavan, during the course of round of the city, also visited two hospitals where the injured are under treatment.

Before leaving for Delhi, Mr Chavan also had a meeting with the opposition leaders of various political parties and a number of delegations also called on him to present their grievances.

Meanwhile, the situation in the city is under control. Two more deaths were reported in today's police firing in Shahpur and Jamalpur localities, taking the total number of those dead in the last 2 days of disturbances to 9; 32 injured are under treatment in two hospitals.

Police fired teargas shells at different places today to disperse the violent mob. About 100 persons have been rounded up during the day on charges of arson, looting shops, and stone throwing. The entire wall city is still under indefinite curfew from 1900 [1330 GMT] yesterday. The army is patrolling the disturbed areas.

Walled City 'Quiet'

*BK210315 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Text] Peace prevailed in the curfew-bound areas of the walled city of Ahmadabad last night. No untoward incident has been reported. The Army continued street patrolling in the entire walled city. However, a few incidents of arson and looting of shops and stone throwing were reported from different areas outside the walled city. The Army has started patrolling in some of the disturbed areas outside the walled city as well.

Chavan Addresses Parliament on Ahmadabad

*BK211621 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Text] The home minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, has appealed to Gujarat students to call off their antireservation agitation in view of the present situation. He sought their help to restore normalcy in Ahmadabad and to ensure that there is no breach of peace elsewhere in the state. He said the state government has already announced its decision not to implement the proposed reservation policy in 1985-86.

Making a statement in the parliament, Mr Chavan expressed the hope that all political parties would join him in his appeal. The home minister, who visited the riot affected areas of Ahmadabad, said the Gujarat government has acted with considerable promptness and right degree of firmness to tackle the situation.

Earlier, during the zero hour in the Lok Sabha, some opposition members demanded discussion on the issue. Again after the home minister's statement some members wanted to raise certain points, but they were not allowed by the chair.

In the Rajya Sabha, Mr Chavan said on the reservation issue efforts would be made to arrive at a consensus through consultations with all concerned.

The situation in the wall city of Ahmadabad continues to be peaceful. There were a few stray incidents of stone throwing, arson, and looting of shops outside the wall city. Indefinite curfew in the city has been further extended.

The state home minister, Mr Ahmar Singh Chowdhury, told the state assembly that the government is doing everything possible to restore normalcy.

A number of Muslim members of parliament met the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, in New Delhi today and conveyed to him their concern over the happenings in Ahmadabad. Later, Maulana Asad Madani said in a press release that they requested Mr Gandhi to visit Ahmadabad at the earliest. Mr Gandhi told them that necessary steps would be taken to normalize the situation quickly.

One Killed in Hyderabad Clashes, Curfew Imposed

*BK220851 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Text] In Hyderabad, one person died and five others were injured following clashes between two groups which broke out last night. According to the commissioner of police, curfew has been clamped from 0600 today in three police station areas of the old city. These are: (Tappa Chapapura), (Mangalghat), and (Asif Nagar). The situation is under control.

HINDUSTAN TIMES: Pakistan Training Extremists

*BK171545 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English
10 Mar 85 p 13*

[By THE HINDUSTAN TIMES correspondent]

[Text] New Delhi, March 9 — The sudden spurt in the activities of pro-Pak organisations in Jammu and Kashmir is causing concern here, as it is feared that this may affect the oncoming tourist season and thus adversely affect the state economy, which is already under strain due to poor tourist arrivals in the state during the last two years because of developments in Punjab and the unsettled conditions in the state.

The arrests of certain elements belonging to pro-Pak parties near the line of actual control have revealed that Pakistan, which had been lying low, has suddenly stepped up its activities and was training a large number of persons in sabotage and other activities to create trouble in the state.

Some such groups trying to cross border have been intercepted by the Army and the Border Security Force guarding the border. The important clue provided by these persons was that for the first time Pak officials were training pro-Pak elements who have crossed over from our side of Kashmir into the territory of the state held by Pakistan illegally, along with Sikh extremists.

The organisations of pro-Pak Kashmiris and pro-Khalistan activists abroad have also started cooperating with each other. Among the activities of the pro-Pak elements in Kashmir is their declaration to celebrate Pakistan independence day, anniversary of the day on which Maqbool Butt, alleged hijacker, was hanged to emphasise the fact that Kashmir was not a part of India.

The groups actively involved in such activities include Jamait-i-Islami, Jamait-i-Tuleba, People's League and other secret organisations which have sprung up in the valley during the last few years. These organisations, from time to time, bring out cyclostyled posters as well as raise slogans asking for plebiscite and claiming that the state was yet to decide its future and was not a part of India.

The major aim of such activities is to create uncertain conditions in the valley which will affect the economy of the state adversely, and thus create unrest and anti-India feelings. The non-political planks adopted by the pro-Pak organisations include agitation against sale or serving of liquor in the state. Regular picketing outside shops selling liquor have already resulted in closure of shops selling liquor in Anantnag and imposition of prohibition without the sanction of law in Sopur.

In Srinagar, the hours of sale by liquor shops as well as in the bars have been restricted in view of the agitation. The other target of these groups are the college libraries and the university, where the authorities have been forced to stop circulation of books written by several well known historians, as these leaders claim that books in question were anti-Islamic.

These groups, though united in their opposition to India and secular parties, have differences on the means to be adopted for achieving their objective. These groups have also indirect support of the National Conference faction loyal to Dr Farooq Abdullah, pro-autonomy Peoples Conference and Awami Action Committee of Maulvi Farooq.

In view of the situation prevailing, the authorities have initiated action against Jamai-i-Islami leaders and leaders of other pro-Pak groups. It is, however, difficult to identify all of them, as large numbers of them have managed to infiltrate into government service, particularly among the ranks of teachers.

The state government headed by Mr G. M. Shah, which for some time had been trying to win favour with such groups to fight their battle with Farooq Abdullah, have now initiated action against them on prompting by the centre. It is however felt that administrative action can serve a limited purpose only as their challenges will have to be met essentially on the political front.

THE STATESMAN Views Bangladesh Referendum

BK200622 Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English 12 Mar 85 p 8

[Editorial: "Choice for Bangladeshis"]

[Text] Disturbing though General Ershad's latest move is, a final verdict must await details of the modalities of the referendum

planned for March 21, and of the question to be put to Bangladesh's approximately 50 million voters. The initial reports from Dhaka are not, however, reassuring though the general described a referendum as a "recognized, established and popular procedure in politics and history," there is enough evidence — most recently from Pakistan — to indicate that it can be tailored to serve a predetermined objective. Some reports suggest that Bangladeshis will be asked baldly to state whether or not General Ershad should continue in office until elections are held under the now suspended Constitution. Prima facie, this may seem a fair question; but since no date has been set for the promised polls, respondents might unwittingly condemn themselves to indefinite extension of martial law. There is also reason to suspect that the general would not have risked an adverse vote without taking adequate precautions to guarantee the outcome. Had he in truth been willing to step down in deference to popular wishes, he would not have cancelled the legislative elections originally scheduled for April 6.

The suspicion that the promised referendum will be little more than a device to prolong his rule is confirmed by the measures recently taken by the Bangladesh Government. Not only has Martial Law been reimposed in full force, but the authorities have warned this time that the slightest breach will meet with harsh official reprisals. Moreover, the action believed to have been taken against opposition politicians of all creeds is a clear indication that General Ershad will not allow any dissenting views to be propagated in the less than two weeks left for the referendum. Whatever may be thought of the policies and conduct of the two alliances, such rigidity cannot ever be reconciled with the General's professed anxiety to restore the democratic process. Even if such measures as night curfew, a total ban on all forms of political activity and the closure of Bangladesh's six universities are justified in the name of law and order, the physical restrictions imposed on political leaders can only be intended as a warning of the consequences of not supporting the regime.

Such a referendum will not carry conviction to anyone except the general and his military coterie. More to the point, it again raises distressing questions about the future of the Bangladeshi polity. Few nations can have been born under such traumatic conditions or suffered such agonizing upheavals in so short a span of time. Bangladesh has known populist demagoguery and military dictatorship, and twice been thrown into turmoil through assassinations. The early promise of a liberal, secular parliamentary system was long ago belied; even if economic chaos and political instability justified General Ershad's coup, he has done little since assuming power to set things right. Moderate as military rulers go, he had the chance to bring about a reconciliation between disparate elements and hand over power to an elected civilian leadership. Instead, the general seems determined to prolong his country's agony by employing one tactic after another to buy time; his tenure may thereby survive a little longer, but the means used suggest no concern for the country's future.

Former Finance Minister Elected Senate Chairman*BK211624 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 1500 GMT 21 Mar 85*

[Excerpts] The inaugural session of the newly elected Senate began in Islamabad this afternoon. Chief Election Commissioner Justice S.A. Nusrat presided. The senators took oath as the session began. The chief election commissioner administered the oath taking. The Senate comprises 87 members, 76 of whom have been elected by the four provincial assemblies.

A message just received says that Ghulam Ishaq Khan [former finance minister] has been unanimously elected chairman of the Senate. Two other candidates — Fida Mohammad Khan and Syed Abbasi — withdrew their candidatures.

DAWN Questions Amendments to Constitution*GF220824 Karachi DAWN in English 20 Mar 85 p 5*

[Editorial: "Amending the Amendments"]

[Text] The second Constitution Amendment Order promulgated by President Ziaul Haq on Monday will evoke a mixed reaction. By simplifying the Constitution amendment procedure earlier prescribed, the president has made it somewhat less difficult for the elected legislature to introduce changes in the Basic Law. Now an amendment bill can be passed by a two-thirds majority of votes in the two houses to become law.

The provision introduced on March 2, which additionally required the consent of a majority of members in each provincial assembly, has now been dropped, except where an amendment seeks to alter the limits of a province. In the latter case, the amendment will have to be supported by a majority of the assembly members of the province concerned. Giving the provinces an important say in the matter of their territorial limits is a thoughtful move. So also is the revised provision excluding the requirement of the provincial assemblies to endorse each and every constitutional amendment. Thus, a balance has been achieved, which is essential to ensure that the amending procedure of the Basic Law is neither so rigid as to make changes almost impossible nor so simple as to make constitutional amendments a far too easy, almost whimsical, option. If one would be a prescription for ossification, the other would virtually make the Basic Law a plaything. The new amendment of the Article 239 will, thus, be generally welcomed.

The section of the Constitution (Second Amendment) Order which will, however, cause concern is the one pertaining to Article 270 A. On the face of it, this article appears to be designed to give legal protection to the laws enacted in the period the country has been under martial law. This has a familiar ring about it. All constitutions adopted after a period of martial law - the 1962 and the 1973 Basic Laws - have contained a provision of this nature. But Section 6 goes much further. It contains the blanket provision that no presidential order, martial law regulation, martial law order or any other law enacted between July 5, 1977, and the date on which this article comes into force (yet to be announced) can be amended or repealed without the previous sanction of the president.

The precise implication is that the amendments to the Constitution announced by President Ziaul Haq on March 2 cannot be touched without his consent. These include those provisions enhancing the president's powers disproportionately, especially his discretionary powers.

By making these amendments almost sacrosanct, the president has raised two key issues, namely, the political desirability of the move and its legal justification. In the conditions at present, when in the absence of political parties and the process of free debate a focus of political orientation is lacking, it will not be judicious to make the altered constitutional framework still more unpalatable to political opinion. This is all the more important because the 1973 Basic Law was the product of a national consensus which would be impossible to forge today for the amended document. The political implications of the amendments are now even more profound in view of the fact that there are virtually irreversible. The legal aspect of the matter continues to be as controversial as before: whether the president is duly empowered to introduce these constitutional amendments, especially when an elected assembly is in place and is the competent body to make changes.

The procedure for amending a constitution is as important as that of writing the constitution. Both need a similar sanction in law and in terms of popular allegiance. Circumspection must also be observed in regard to basic laws and rules. The changes which are being introduced nearly every day in the election rule - often giving them retrospective effect - could likewise have far-reaching repercussions. Now that the political process is being revived, the government should find it advisable to adhere as far as possible to the norms and practices of constitutional government.

NEPAL

Briefs

Ambassador to Maldives— His majesty the king has appointed Royal Nepalese Ambassador to India Jagadish Shumshere Jung Bahadur Rana royal Nepalese ambassador to Maldives also. This was stated in a notice issued by the principal press secretariat of his majesty the king. [Text] [Katmandu External Service in English 1450 GMT 18 Mar 85 BK]

SRI LANKA

President Declares Banks 'Essential Service'

BK211421 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] President Jayewardene has issued a special gazette notification declaring all banks an essential service to the community. This will apply to all banks, including the central bank. According to the regulations, any person who fails to report for work will be deemed to have vacated post in addition to being guilty of an offence. At yesterday's Cabinet meeting the government warned of possible stern action against bank employees who have refused to work overtime in support of a wage demand. The action on the part of bank employees is regarded as an attempt to obstruct the work of the state at a time the country is facing a crisis in the north.

Jayewardene Says Strikes Will Not Be tolerated

BK221140 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 22 Mar 85

[Text] President Jayewardene made it clear today that the present government elected to power by the people's mandate would

never tolerate any attempt by any section of workers to threaten the government by the organization of strikes. He said that the government was responsible to the voters who elected the government to power and not to the employees of the government.

The president pointed out that the government would have to treat employees who were on strike against the aspirations of the people as having vacated their posts. The government will not hesitate to recruit new personnel to fill such vacancies. President Jayewardene was speaking at the annual general meeting of the national posts and telecommunications union which was held at the John de Silva Memorial Hall in Colombo this morning.

Mr Jayewardene said that as the northern terrorists had launched offensive against the government, any organization of strikes was an encouragement and support extended to them. The president was of the view that the organizers of such strikes were trying to inconvenience the government by disrupting the day-to-day work.

He said that those organizers of strikes had even tended to provoke school children and therefore the government would have to deal with them suitably. The president pointed out that solution to any of the problems could be achieved democratically by negotiation.

Parliament Again Extends State of Emergency

BK221355 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1245 GMT 22 Mar 85

[Excerpt] A resolution to extend the state of emergency by another month was passed in parliament today by a two-thirds majority. One hundred and twenty-three members voted for the resolution while there was one dissenting vote. The Sri Lanka Communist Party member voted against the extension of emergency. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party abstained from voting.

Ayatollah Khomeyni Receives Officials at New Year
LD211300 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT
 21 Mar 85

[Text] At the beginning of the new year, President of the Republic Khamene'i; Hashemi-Rafsanjani, speaker of the Islamic Consultative Assembly; Musavi-Ardabili, president of the state Supreme Court; and Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi were received by and met Imam Khomeyni, leader of the Revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, this morning. The meeting was also attended by: a group of deputies from the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the Council of Ministers, under secretaries to various ministries, members of the Guardian Council, the Supreme Judicial Council and the State Supreme Court, the state Inspectorate-General, the Council of Administrative Justice, the Central Secretariat of the Friday Imams, Tehran's fighting clergy, the academic community at the Qom religious seminary, Hojjat ol-Islam Falsafi and Tehran's preachers, members of the Presidential Institution, the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the commanders of the Armed Forces and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, the Police and Gendarmerie of the Islamic republic, the Islamic Revolution Committee, the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, the Supervisory Council, the managing director and responsible staff of the Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran, IRNA, the Army Prosecutor's office, the Politico-ideological departments of the Armed Forces and security forces, the 15th Khordad foundation, the Islamic Revolution Martyr Foundation, the Organization of Islamic Publicity, the Endowments Organization, the Hajj Organization, the Imam's Assistance Committee, the Committee of Guilds Affairs, the staff headquarters responsible for holding Friday prayers, the Consultative Bureau of the Supreme Defense Council, the Literacy Movement, the Islamic Revolution Documentation Office, the Red Crescent Society of the Islamic Republic, Islamic Republic of Iran Air, Qom's Publicity Office, the Free Islamic University, the Imam al-Sadiq University — may peace be upon him — the newspapers and press, the war zones' support headquarters and the supervisory council of non-Iranian seminarists at the Qom religious seminary. To begin with Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, president of the Republic, congratulated the leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the new year and then Imam Khomeyni, the hope of the world's meek, read a long speech.

Khomeyni Speech

GF211530 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT
 21 Mar 85

[Speech by Ayatollah Ruhullah Khomeyni to civil and military officials at Jamaran Mosque in Tehran on 21 March — Recorded]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

I extend my new year greetings to all the world's Muslims, the world's oppressed, our noble nation, to you gentlemen, to all those serving at the war fronts, to those who serve behind the fronts, to all who had a part in this revolution, who made sacrifices, who have been martyred, are missing, or are prisoners, and hope that

this new year will bring happiness for our nation and all other nations subjected to oppression in the world.

In fact all victories, nonvictories, states, and superpowers are all transitory matters. Today we sit here but in another 100 years there will be no trace left of us — we will be the past, the absent. If we win, it will become the past. If we lose, it will become the past. If we are powerful, or if we lack power, it will all come to pass. What will remain is what we ourselves have. What remains is what we carry with us to the next world. We should think of serving — the service which would prove honorable for us and for the world. Attacking, victory, killing — all these without their spiritual basis all amount to defeat. In fact those who look more victorious in the eyes of others are in fact the more defeated.

These big powers that have existed in the world still exist, and will exist in future. However, if they lack the dimension which takes men to happiness, they are in fact defeated. A few days of eating, sleep, crime, dishonesty, and then this place will be closed and another door to another world will open. When this happens, the deeds of this world will give evidence against us — they will all be there. We must think of pleasing God. "If you support God He will grant you victory." [koranic verse]

It is nothing mysterious. It is nothing hidden. If there is no going forward there is no defeat as well. Victory is something related to the man himself. We may be victorious on all fronts yet it may not please God because we might have been fighting for ourselves. If we do it for ourselves, it means we did not work for God and the promise of God will not be fulfilled.

If he accepts it anyway it would be his special grace. When God said that you support God and He will in turn grant you victory means that you open the gate to victory and God will help. You should work for God, you should go forward for God. You undergo hardships for the sake of God. And you do everything for God. What you do on the war fronts should be in the service of God. Whatever is being done behind the fronts should be also in the service of God.

Who runs the affairs of the army should be doing so for the sake of God. Who runs the affairs of the country should also be doing so to please God. Who serves in the Majlis should also serve God for his victory.

For that matter, if we all serve God, then God will surely keep His promise. If there is any defect, it is within us. It may be that what we consider to be a victory may not be so in the eyes of God. It may not be furthering the objectives of God. By the objectives of God is meant service to the oppressed, to the needy, for the furtherance of Islamic objectives, for removing oppression from the oppressed and for cutting the hand of the oppressors. All these are the objectives of God.

God has said all these things and we must follow them. If God had said go and sit at home, we would have gone to sit in our homes. When God said, kill them, we do so in obedience to God. In this case, victory or defeat loses any meaning because serving God and obeying his orders is all victory.

These things that have to do with spirituality and have to do with another world for us are a tangible matter and an investment. If we have them in our hands, even if we are defeated or not defeated or if we are successful, it makes no difference at all.

If that is not what it means, then again it will not make a difference because then those successes would be more of a loss than a victory. So strive to make this interpretation correct. Strive to have whatever government officials there are to be people who work for God. To work for God it is necessary to see what He has said. What did He tell us to do?

He has said that we should look after the deprived. You have to look after the weak, you have to watch over the poor, you have to provide for everyone. When you see that this is how you have to serve, this is God's victory. The victory of the Lord is a victory for all His people, His religion. When we made the people of God victorious for Him, because they are His servants, even if we are not successful on the battle fronts, we are victorious here.

If this does not happen this way, we have been defeated now. At the climax of victory we are defeated. Here at the peak of defeat, we are victorious. This is the balance. And this is what we have to take into consideration. Do not find pride in any success, outside of matters which have nothing to do with God. Do not feel defeated in any failure because we didn't want to do something ourselves to be defeated. We wanted to obey the orders of God. God has said that we should go and cut off the hand of the oppressor. We go and as much as we are able and have the power, we cut off the hands of the oppressors. If we cannot do this we have done our duty anyway.

He has told us that the murderers of the tribe who annoy you should be attacked. This is obeying orders. We must be at His disposal without qualm and without question. We must obey in whatever we do. If you preach, it should be to obey God. If you did not hear any preachings it should again be to obey God.

If we make war it should be to obey God. If we make peace it should be because we obey God. Anywhere He says: Do this, we do it, and anytime He says do this, we do it. We do things this way in a way that we do not contribute anything from ourselves, because everything is from Him. We don't have anything to contribute anyway. We think we have something to give. Whatever there is, it is from Him. Anything that we think we have, it is not the case. It is His, and it is in our custody. And this custody at one time or another will no longer be there. And if think that we have something, it is not ours, and we are making a mistake.

All the pains in this world are there because of mankind's ignorance. He thinks he is important. Since he thinks he is someone important, he wants to gain power over everyone.

He wants to make everything easy for himself. And this is what brings mankind to misery. It would be correct for man to want everything for Him. And to want everything for Him. It is in fact wanting for the people of God, for his laws.

If we in this war that has been imposed on us understand that we have defended ourselves and we have gotten rid of these corrupt warmongers, it is because God has said we must defend. It is

defense and we are defending ourselves. If He had told us to go and make war, then we would have made war. Now, since He has said defend yourselves, we will defend. While they are engaged in these acts of evil, we have to defend ourselves which means we are only obeying God.

Let them say anything they want. If it is the will of God, you should not get upset by what people may say. Everybody talks. Not everybody talks, but some things are said. You stand all day obeying God and they talk about you anyway. You go and engage in war for God, they will say something about you. You are not immune to people's tongues. The same way that the Prophet of God was not immune from this. Nor was 'Ali. But because what they did was for God, if people said: Does 'Ali go to the mosque, does he pray? There were plenty of lies like this. If he was upset, it would be because there were such people who thought like that. Not because the people had talked behind his back. If the prophets ever got upset it was because these people of God who had come here were acting in an independent manner and engaging in corruption. This is what they worried about.

I think that this is what it means. This piety that the prophet of God had; no one else had it. Their titles, whatever they were, were not as important as his. The more the titles, the more the injustice that happens in the world. If he hears that there is someone on the other side of the world who has been bothered, he gets upset.

We should not say this is my town, or my country, say there is one oppressed person in the world. As you know 'Ali said ('when they brought things out of a man's leg), what is death for a man? He dislikes oppression for other people in its Koranic meaning, not for himself. He likes kindness the way it should be. If someone is kind to another, he is happy because there is kindness. He gets upset when injustice is done to someone because of the injustice itself.

This means that humans should know what they are, where they are, and where they are going. All these things will be removed, but our lines will not be removed. Our lines are there now, on the other side. If they remove the curtain now we know ourselves what we have done and what there is. Others will see too, if God wants.

You should strive to obey the Lord. He has said that you should be unified, you should be together. If someone utters one word that would damage this unity not only is this wrongdoing and treasonous but it may disrupt a whole country. If there is sabotage against this unity, this unity that exists among our people, between our government and our people, if someone tries to disrupt this unity he has done wrong in the Lord's presence, and he has disobeyed. He has also committed a crime against Islam's republic.

This meaning needs to stay on man's mind, what God has said, you should stay together, you should not have differences among you. God has said you must have unity and for God's will we want to have unity. No one can disrupt this unity. This is God's unity and God's will. No one can disrupt this. But if they want this unity for their own benefit, if they say there should be unity so that I may use it to my own benefit, this is for the devil. This has no use at all. We should seek to strengthen unity among us so

that our people and our government do not think that this is the people, and this is the government. We all belong to God. We are a caravan travelling through this world and we must obey God and we must be unified. If this is the case victory is no problem and you will achieve this. This is a victory that the Lord will give you. This is a happiness that God will give you. We will accept this as a gift from God.

If God forbid this is not the case, and if we become successful by the power of the sword or the gun, that is a victory that we gained by ourselves. That is not victory but defeat. You may now think this is victory but it is a great defeat. You must stay together to obey God who has asked us to be unified and not to have differences. We must keep this unity. There is unity but it must be continued, we must continue this unity. We should not listen to those who God forbid want to sow the seeds of dissent. Of course there are people everywhere who want to create subversion but when there is a people who want to create unity for God they will no longer listen to someone who wants to cause subversion.

The person who listens is one who is lacking something somewhere. He lacks something in the spiritual sense. If there is something wrong in the spiritual and religious sense, then the things that are said will have an effect on people, and this effect will gradually rise and then a man can be subverted.

If we do not value this verse which says that we are from God and for God and we should act for God as we have to return to God: "We come from God and we will return to God." [koranic verse] So we return to Him. If we accept this in our hearts that we come from Him, then we will soon return to Him. God has said remain united because if you remain united nobody can harm you. We should be united in obedience to God. This amounts to communion with God. This is a relationship that never falters because it never contradicts what God has ordained.

We ourselves the weak, help the weak creatures of God and this we do with the great grace of God that he bestows over his creatures. This is our help to the weak, the oppressed, which God has called his own and the saying that you support God and he will grant you victory also means that you obey God. Apart from Him, everything is nothing. What we do in service of the creatures of God, God considers it as a service to himself. As He has said, God will make you victorious.

We know that God does not need our help. We serve His creatures and God has himself accepted this as service to Himself in His abundant grace. We have no doubt in God's saying. This is a matter of understanding and the mind accepts it.

God has said remain united. If we only follow this teaching of God we will become immune to any blow from anybody. Whatever schemes they may make will be neutralized. Whatever lies they may tell or the propaganda that is now raging in other countries, will all be neutralized because we have determined that we are united for God only. Our unity is not to get ourselves to some place or do a certain thing. No.

He has said that we remain united: therefore we are united. And this unity, because it is for God, all things against it are naturally ineffective because whatever the others do is against

God. Enmity to this is in fact against God. We work for God in this cause. Anybody who opposes us is in fact opposing God because we act for His cause.

We work for Islam and this is why we have enemies. They think that if Islam spreads, their own dominion shrinks, that infidelity shrinks. All these things will one day come to pass. The powers and such other things will be replaced. They think that a small (?threat) has appeared in Iran which is now the talk of everyone in the West and the East. They talk about it. They in fact are afraid of this talk.

Today Iran is the topic. They are afraid of this topic. [sentence indistinct] Iran has people who have touched off a change toward God and this very change has united them and has enabled them to tap a vast source of power that now opposes satanic powers and has broken the latter. We continue to stand and confront. We stand fast with a clenched fist and we want neither the East nor the West.

If the East wants to cooperate with us, or wants to make a show of its power before us, we are not fighting. If the West does the same, we will not do the same. Whichever of these makes an aggression, we cannot take them on. But it should be clear to all of them that the victory of an Islamic state comes from God. It is the victory of God's creatures, the victory of the oppressed.

If we grasp this we should not be afraid of anything and God willing, we will not be afraid and no one can subjugate us. We will be victorious everywhere and on all fronts. On the battlefronts, on the peace fronts, on the front of, so to speak, the hospitals, in all these places we will be victorious. I hope that the great God gives us strength so that we succeed in reaching the objective, the objective of the prophets and we, God willing, remain united. We hope to take this caravan to its destination and hope to hand over this sacred trust to the owner of the trust. Peace be upon you.

Khamene'i Praises Determination of Armed Forces *LD211646 Tehran IRNA in English 1630 GMT 21 Mar 85*

[Text] Tehran, March 21 IRNA — President 'Ali Khamene'i said in a meeting with military commanders here Thursday that a fighter plane's pilot who penetrates the Iraqi regime's air defence system and flies over Baghdad and Saddam's head, is the objective manifestation of the Iranian nation's firm power and determination.

Joint Staff Chief Col. Sohrabi as well as a group of military commanders of the Armed Forces visited the head of the Supreme Defence Council on the first day of the new Iranian year to congratulate him on the occasion.

Addressing the visitors, the president extended his mutual congratulations to them and praised the strong determination and devotion of the Iranian Armed Forces in the war against the Iraqi regime.

According to the constitution, he said, as long as the country is not invaded and "our national prestige" not insulted, the army

would be utilised for the nation's construction. But with the increasing attacks and conspiracies of world arrogance against the Iranian nation and revolution in the past years, the situation had changed so much that the non-military too had joined the army.

"Under circumstances like today when the threats of global arrogance are not confined to the borders and our national prestige, honor and independence is at stake, it is natural that some people undertake the defence of the nation's water and soil. At the peak of this spear stand the army and other Islamic combatants, the Islamic Revolution's Guards corps, the Basij and other combatants."

In another development today, President Khamene'i visited a number of the Islamic combatants wounded in the recent 'operation Badr' at a Tehran hospital and gave them flowers and volumes of the Holy Koran on the occasion of the new year.

Khamene'i Receives Indian, Pakistani Greetings

LD212141 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] According to a Central News Unit report from New Delhi, on the occasion of the New Year, Indian President Zail Singh sent a message to President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i and our nation. In his message, the Indian president expressed a desire for further expansion and strengthening of friendly relations between Iran and India.

According to an IRNA dispatch from Islamabad, General Ziaul Haq, the Pakistani president, addressed a message to Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, offering greetings to our president on behalf of the nation and government of Pakistan on the occasion of the New Year. In this message, the president of Pakistan expressed hope for further expansion of relations in every field between the two countries, which share the same history and civilization, and the same religion. He also expressed hope for the continuation of joint efforts for the strengthening of the two countries' security.

Musavi: No Cease-Fire, Retaliation To Continue

GF220558 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 22 Mar 85

[Excerpt] According to our correspondent, Mir Hoseyn Musavi, the prime minister, stressing the fact that the Iranian nation has successfully traversed a decisive phase in the past 2 weeks, said: In view of the fact that our nation does not fear the offering of martyrs or enduring of tribulations, no cease-fire between truth and falsehood can be envisaged. The problem is one of a continuous and protracted struggle against world oppression and its agents. The prime minister was speaking yesterday at services to pay homage to the martyrs of the Badr operations and martyrs Hajj 'Abbas Karimi, commander of the Mohammad Rasulallah division, and Khadem Rastegar and Hasan Bahmani, in particular, at the Shahid Motahheri school of higher education.

Continuing, he said: Today the ruling regime of Iraq is being supported by various governments by means of miscellaneous equipment and armaments, but our armor is faith, perseverance, resistance, and not accepting any compromise. In another part of his speech, Mir Hoseyn Musavi referred to the policy of retaliation and said: We have repeatedly declared that we do not want to attack Iraqi cities, but if the enemy wishes to endanger the whole revolution and our system by its actions we will follow the reciprocal policy to counteract his barbaric actions. He added: If we had not responded with a reciprocal blow to every blow by the enemy, we would certainly have been defeated. The prime minister continued: We are consistent in continuing our policy of retaliation and we shall not entertain any doubts on this point.

Council Speaker Warns of 5th Missile for Baghdad

LD221121 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 22 Mar 85

[Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Hashemi-Rafsanjani, spokesman of the Supreme Defense Council, speaking during today's Friday prayers ceremonies, declared: Iran will soon fire its fifth missile toward Baghdad. The Imam's representative in the Supreme Defense Council, emphasizing the fact that Iran's recent operations are only a warning and a slap in the face to the Baghdad regime, said: Our main operations are still to come and whenever it becomes appropriate we will act.

Deputy Foreign Minister Visits Yemeni Counterpart

LD211506 Tehran IRNA in English 1357 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA — Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Arab met with his Yemeni counterpart in Aden Wednesday following his meeting earlier with President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY).

In the meeting with the PDRY deputy foreign minister recent developments in the region and the Iraqi imposed war were discussed and the expansion of bilateral relations with Steadfastness Front countries, of which PDRY is a member, was stressed.

The PDRY deputy foreign minister also voiced support for the Islamic Republic's stance in relation with the U.N. secretary general's proposal to halt attacks against civilian targets. Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to Aden and head of the Asian Bureau of the PDRY Foreign Ministry were also present at the meeting.

Arab left Aden for Abu Dhabi Wednesday afternoon and was seen off by PDRY Foreign Ministry officials at the airport.

'Chemical Bomb' Victims Leave for Europe

LD211741 Tehran IRNA in English 1725 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 21 IRNA — A group of 33 Iranian combatants wounded by Iraqi chemical bombs in the recent

"Badr operation" in the southern battlefronts, were despatched to Europe for treatment.

The victims who are being accompanied by Iranian medical teams left Tehran Thursday for England, Germany, Austria and Belgium.

8 Soldiers to Vienna

AU221016 Vienna DIE PRESSE in German 22 Mar 85 p 10

[Text] Vienna — Eight Iranian soldiers, who — allegedly as a result of the use of chemical weapons by Iraq — suffered serious injuries in the Gulf war, were brought to Vienna by an Iran Air plane on Thursday evening [21 March]. Three of the injured Iranians were immediately taken to the intensive care unit of Vienna's general hospital. The Iranian plane carried a total of 30 wounded soldiers; 22 of them were flown to the FRG, to Belgium and Great Britain. Once before, about a year ago, 10 injured Iranians were brought to Vienna for medical treatment. Iran has repeatedly accused Iraq of using chemical weapons in the Gulf war.

Reportage on War Activities, Results 21, 22 Mar

12 Martyred in Ilam Bombing

LD211454 Tehran IRNA in English 1445 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Ilam, Ilam Pr., March 21 IRNA — Eleven Iraqi planes bombarded 25 points in Ilam at 10:30 hours local time (07:00 GMT) Thursday [21 March], martyring at least 12 people and wounding 45 others.

Many houses were also destroyed in the attack.

In another air raid by two enemy planes on Gilan-e Gharb, in Bakhtaran Province at 09:35 Thursday morning a number of houses were destroyed.

Further Report on Air Raids

LD211516 Tehran IRNA in English 1505 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 21, IRNA — Three Iraqi jets violated the air space of Zanjan at 19:30 local time (16:00 GMT) Wednesday [20 March] but were forced to retreat before carrying out any operations.

Enemy intruder planes also transgressed air space of Qazvin (Zanjan Province) at 19:30 local time the same day but were repelled by intense Iranian anti-aircraft fire.

Four Iraqi jets violated the air space of Arak (central Pr.) at 19:00 local time Wednesday.

The enemy planes were forced to escape under intense anti-aircraft fire of Islamic combatants.

Iraqi aircraft violated the air space of Khorramabad, Lorestan Province, three times last night at 19:35, 20:20 and 23:15.

The intruder planes intended to bombard residential area of the city but were forced to retreat.

Iraqi jet fighters intruded the air space of Sar Dasht and Piranshah (W. Azarbaijan Pr.) at 23:00 and 22:30 but were repulsed before firing any rockets.

Also violated was the airspace of Urumiyeh at 19:40.

Enemy planes broke the sound barrier over Piranshah and Sar Dasht Border town in W. Azarbaijan Pr. Wednesday.

Enemy fighter planes violated the air space of Bakhtaran and Islamabad-e Gharb in Bakhtaran Province breaking the sound barrier over these cities at 22:58 local time last night.

In Bakhtaran bombardment five people were injured.

Iraqi planes transgressed air space of Tabriz at 23:00 local time Wednesday but were repelled.

Hamadan in Hamadan province and Dezful in Khuzestan Province were bombed by a number of intruding Iraqi jet fighters at 23:00 and 23:20 Wednesday. No damages or casualties were reported.

Iraqi jets also broke the sound barrier over Nahavand and Tuysarkan in Hamadan province Wednesday.

Joint Staff Communique

LD211719 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1637 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] According to the communique of the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, from 1122 today, in the course of an air clash, one Iraqi MIG aircraft became the target of the fire of a fighter plane belonging to the Air Force of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in the western region of the country, and was brought down.

During the past 24 hours, the artillery units of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, by opening fire on military and economic installations of the cities of Basra, Mandali, Zurbatiyah, (Warmahral) and Badrah, in Iraq, inflicted heavy material losses on them.

According to the same report, intruding Iraqi aircraft today bombed the cities of Ilam, Marivan, Gilan-e Gharb and the environs of Sar-e Pol-e Zahab, as a result of which a number of our compatriots in those cities were martyred or injured and many houses were ruined. The air invasions of the enemy too, of the air space of several of our country's cities, were neutralized and repelled by the timely fire of the ground-air defense units and the tactical measures of the fighters of the Air Force of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In the north-west operational sector, too, the combatants of Islam, while safeguarding their own positions set ablaze and destroyed firing emplacements, one observation post, and one 106 mm rifle. In the exchange of fire on the shores of Arvand Rud

our fighting units, creating confusion in the engineering activities of the aggressor, destroyed two bunkers and observation posts of the mercenaries and killed or wounded 25 of their troops.

Iraqi Planes Hit Towns

*LD221120 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Text] According to IRNA, at 1215, during the Friday prayers ceremonies, an Iraqi plane violated Tehran airspace, but was forced to flee, thanks to our intense anti-aircraft fire.

Also according to a report of the Central News Unit, about noon and during the Friday prayers, Iraqi planes violated Iranian airspace over the towns of Qazvin and Hamadan. But they were intercepted by effective fire of our air defense units and before fleeing they dropped their bombs near Hamadan. This report also indicates that last night the enemy planes attacked the towns of Khorramabad and Arak, but they were confronted by the timely fire of our air defense units in the region and fled.

Attack East of Tigris Repulsed

*LD221156 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT
22 Mar 85*

[Excerpts] Khatam ol-Anbiya, the joint operational center of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, has announced the following:

Last night the Zionist enemy, having concentrated his forces to the east of the Tigris, attempts to approach the positions of the Islamic forces at the (Torabeh) observation post. Our mighty combatants attacked and dealt severe blows on the enemy forces.

Based on the report of our correspondent, our forces captured a number of the Iraqi aggressors, in addition to killing or wounding a considerable number of the Iraqi forces.

A private of the Iraqi forces who was captured last night near (Torabeh) observation post, in an interview with a correspondent of the Central News Unit, explained how he had been captured, saying: The commanding officer of the 10th Armored Brigade and one of the commanders of the Special Presidential Guards are among the dead.

He added: Our commanders made great efforts to recapture their lost positions, but we were forced to retreat every time, with many killed and wounded. Last night, the commanders forced us to attack the Iranian positions. This time, as in the past, a large number of our personnel were killed and wounded; the others either escaped or were captured.

Sa'id Taha, another Iraqi private who was captured by the Islamic forces last night, said: We attacked the Iranian positions several times, supported by modern tanks such as the T-72. But every time we had to retreat, losing a large part of our personnel and equipment, because of the courage and incredible

valor of the Iranian forces. Last night, a number of our forces were killed or wounded; I was captured, along with another group of Iraqi soldiers, by the Iranian forces.

TV Carries Film of Captives of Badr Operation

*LD212356 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT
21 Mar 85*

[Text] Last night a film was shown on Iranian television about the capture of a combatant of Islam who had penetrated deep behind enemy lines in order to reconnoiter its military formations. In this film which was relayed via satellite to the rest of the world, a combatant of Islam was seen among the Ba'thist forces, facing foreign journalists and shouting: Death to Saddam! Death to Saddam! at a time when the Ba'thist authorities were beating and assaulting him even in front of the foreign journalists.

The Iraqi regime, following its severe defeat in the Badr operations which resulted in the death, wounding and capturing of 15,000 of its troops, has started a vast propaganda campaign in order to erase the gains of these victorious operations. But despite all the propaganda of the Iraqi regime, the rulers of Iraq have been able to show only one prisoner who was captured in the process of reconnaissance operations, and this attempt too was a failure thanks to the shouts of: Death to Saddam! of this warrior of Islam, who even when surrounded by the enemy as a captive, fearlessly expressed his support for Khomeini.

This film, apart from showing the resistance of this combatant of Islam, carried shots of Iraqi troops who were captured by the combatants of Islam in the course of the Badr operations. All the latter shouted: Death to Saddam! Neither East nor West, But the Islamic Republic, and voicing gratitude for their freedom from the claws of the Ba'thist regime and for their return to the folds of Islam.

Gulf Paper: Iran Buying New Fleet of Tankers

GF211316 Manama GULF MIRROR in English 21 Mar 85 p 2

[By Philip Moore]

[Text] An Iranian supply ship hit in an Iraqi missile attack at Khark Island yesterday killing six people, was one of the new "boat-for-oil" vessels, shipping sources said.

Khark Island was hit by Iraqi jets for apparently the second day running.

Iran is reported to have bought about eight new supply boats from a Japanese company in exchange for oil, the sources said.

The ships are the start of a wholesale boosting of the fleet in and around Khark.

The Iranians are said to maintain some vessels on lease arrangements at the oil exporting depot but obtaining expatriate manpower is now a major problem.

They intend to buy "a fleet of 30 or 40 boats" and crew them with Iranians rather than expatriates, the sources said.

But with Iraq stepping up strikes on Khark Island again — there were 11 seamen reportedly killed in an attack on another supply ship recently — the Iranians could be up for a loss of this potential oil revenue, the sources said.

And REUTER said yesterday's attack followed what diplomats in Baghdad described as a "huge explosion in Khark in which 12 people died and at least one oil storage tank was destroyed."

They said the blast happened hours after Iraq launched an air raid on Bushehr.

But shipping sources said several supertankers were taking on crude oil and operations were normal after the latest strike.

But they added that the bulk of Iranian oil was now being moved via Sirri Island and further south.

The sources confirmed that Iranian coastal tankers were taking oil down south.

The number of shipowners not prepared to send tankers into Khark had risen drastically.

"There are some tankers taking pot luck but most are happier to take on oil south in the Gulf," said one source.

The Iraqis also claimed to have blitzed three more Iranian cities yesterday.

Briefs

Narcotics Seizure — Law officers have recovered more than 43 kg of opium and burned opium in Kerman Province. Smugglers were arrested and turned over to the authorities. [Summary] [*Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI* 11 Mar 85 p 4 GF]

Narcotics Smugglers Caught — Police in Shirvan caught two smugglers with 2.8 kg of opium. The smugglers were handed over to the authorities. [Summary] [*Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian* 11 Mar 85 p 17 GF]